

Be Cool, Draw Energy From Spiritual Devotion

By CHAITANYA CHARAN DAS

Have you seen how peacefully a child sleeps in the lap of his parent, even in a noisy, crowded local train? The hustle-bustle disturbs everyone, but not the child, due to his implicit faith in the protection of his parent.

All of us strive diligently to overcome our many fears: financial, familial, social, academic and physical. However, the necessary security measures like insurances, helmets, buzzer alarms and health check-ups fail to free us from a disconcerting sense of insecurity within us. Why?

All fear originates in an unbalanced, unrealistic material conception of life. The material aspect of our life has its importance; we need to feed, clothe, house and provide for ourselves and our loved ones. Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita that when we seek our sense of identity, self-worth, security and pleasure exclusively from our material positions and possessions, we open ourselves to fear. Because the material realm is characterised by constant, unpredictable changes, which often threaten to destroy or harm whatever is dear to us. We prepare ourselves to face some of the small, predictable and controllable changes, but still we consciously or subconsciously dread the huge, unpredictable and uncontrollable changes.

How should we overcome fear? The more things change, the more we need to embrace the things that don't change: "Of the material, there is no endurance and of the spiritual, there is no cessation". Beyond the stage of material activity that preoccupies our mind lies a vast, unexplored realm of spiritual tranquillity. We are spiritual beings, souls, originally from a spiritual world,

the kingdom of God, who is our eternal loving father. Currently we are occupying material bodies and inhabiting this material world. The more we harmonise with our spiritual nature, the more we become fearless. Understanding that we are, at our core, spiritual and, hence indestructible, fills us with an unshakeable self-security; we recognise that worldly upheavals that affect our material assets have no power whatsoever to hurt us.

By chanting the holy names of God like the Hare Krishna mantra, we progressively experience both our own spiritual identity and God's protective presence and guidance in our life. The more we enrich our faith by chanting, the more our devotion for Krishna increases. And when we make



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our life's work a devotional offering for His service, we focus more on the object of our service. This shift of focus releases large reserves of mental energy, which are choked by our worry about the future. Chanting gives us the calmness to see that almost all fears are more perceived than experienced. The more we become free from fear of the future, the more we can fully absorb ourselves in our present duties.

Spiritual principles and practices empower us to access and utilise even our material talents better. Ultimately spirituality is the only way to conquer the greatest of all fears — death. For a mature devotee, death is not a fearful termination of existence, but a joyful reunion with God. Just as the child stays peaceful amidst chaos, let us become tranquil amidst ups and downs by empowering ourselves with spiritual devotion.

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